

PLANNING WORK GROUP

Meeting Notes

September 9, 2003

Denali Commission Conference Room

NEXT MEETING

THURSDAY 10/16 9-12

DENALI COMMISSION

Introduction of Group and Guests:

Gene Kane chair: Al Ewing, Rachael Petro, Berney Richert, Colleen Bickford, Kitty Farnham, Gerry McDonagh, John Gliva, Ruth St. Amour, Laura Walters, Wayne Maloney, Jolene John, Chris Mello, Scott Ruby and Cindy Roberts.

Guests: Wanetta Ayres - SWAMC, Carl Berger, Frank Muncy, Chuck Ayres, Sheila Kopczynski - USDA-RD,

I Regional Planning role of ARDORs (AK Regional Development Organizations)

Wanetta Ayers, ED for SW Alaska Municipal Conference (SWAMC)

ARDORs were reauthorized by the legislature for 2 years – through FY2006. Senator Wilken is still concerned about the effectiveness of the program and designed a punch list to report to legislature. The CBA of the program from '93 forward will be documented. Midge Clouse (DCED) is developing a report for the legislature for January.

Recommendations include;

1. empowerment: link ARDORs into every aspect of economic development
2. go to performance-based funding. Institute a 3-tiered funding system which recognizes quality and number of activities and has incentives / leverage on SOA funds.
3. accountability: de-certify and de-fund ARDORs which do not perform.

SWAMC's 2003-2008 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) was circulated. The CEDS followed EDA guidelines and captured 12-15 years of planning. During the CEDS creation, Ayres was a contractor as well as a Board Member, as well as on staff for 12 months. Planning document mission was to create an environment where business could thrive. The success of the project reflected the public-private partnership as well as the stability of the people involved. 54 communities participated in the project. It is available at www.dced.state.ak.us/cbd/ardor/ardor.htm.

Carl Berger, E.D. Lower Kuskokwim Economic Development Council

50% of the lower Kuskokwim region is in the ARDOR. CDQ developments are the major economic projects in the area. Quinhagak has a salmon processing operation. The area is diversifying into halibut and herring processing from Pollock only. The ARDOR has had a RC&D designation (Resource Conservation & Development) from EDA for 3 years and will be producing a work plan for the organization as part of that commitment.

Other projects are planned for Quinhagak including an improved runway which will allow direct export of fish to Anchorage rather than with a stop/reload in Bethel. Ice is currently being distributed there. More than 800 salmon permits exist in the area.

There is a difficulty obtaining information re projects coming into the area. The DCED database (RAPIDS) is being used. There is currently no working relationship with Alaska Growth Capital. Kitty asked what training would be helpful (and obtained where?) to support diversifying the region's economy. It was noted that the herring market is often saturated by the time the region can fish. The People's Learning Center in Bethel has training.

Wanetta Ayres mentioned that there is a missed opportunity for locals to get jobs on federal land units. She said that there is a mentorship program to prepare junior high students to work in these areas (after high school). A skilled trades data base is in formative stages in SWAMC.

Kitty mentioned that a skills bank has value when the skills are verifiable and a "community resume" of existing human resources can be built. Carl mentioned that the ARDOR and the school District are doing classes on entrepreneurship. There are more requests than can be filled currently. Tetlin has a distance delivery/mentorship program where participants are counseled from a hub system. UA's Small Business Development Center (SBDC) has only 1 person assigned to rural communities.

Sue Cogswell E.D. Prince William Sound Economic Development District

Valdez Fisheries Development Association has EDA funds to teleconference training re multi-species fish processing. With 300 permits in the Valdez area, there is a major push to improve cold-storage and improve value-added processing. The intent is to establish year-round, small-scale jobs rather than the prior 30-day blitz. Whittier is pursuing a new museum project.

II Rural Development Council - Regional Planning Efforts Chuck Akers E.D.

The organization is one of 40 state-wide organizations designed to be a loose assembly of state, federal, local and tribal agencies in addition to private sector members. It was formed 10 years ago from \$265 K in USDA funds. Last year it had \$60 K funding from USDA. As of 10/1/03, it should get its federal designation. It hopes that FFY '04 budget will be \$65 K. VA and HUD have contributed funding in the past.

One of the RDC projects has been the "fire station in a box" which has delivered 56 fire stations to rural communities with a combination of funds. Grants for this program target less economically viable villages. FEMA has contributed funds for 8 villages. When equipment arrives, there is training for local volunteers.

III IAID Mapping – Initiative for Accelerated Infrastructure Development the base for community planning John Gliva

Juneau Housing Authority has purchased aerial photos to fit IAID format. John is marketing projects to the Copper River area as a follow-up to the Glenallen meetings earlier this year. The non-ANCSA communities of Paxson, Kenney Lake, McCarthy, Chitina, and Tonsina are also looking at future IAID contracts. Al suggested going through the ARDOR (Copper Valley EDC) to move things forward. Alyeska Pipeline Service Co's Janie Leask received a briefing from John.

Coleen reported marketing IAID through the housing authorities. DOT is aware of the need for its financial participation and is looking for the funding.

IV Bulk Fuel Storage Facility Management Training Program Scott Ruby

Denali Commission has funded manager and bookkeeper training. DCED/RUBA developed similar training for water and sewer operators.

Gerry McDonagh reported that the Denali Training Fund applied for \$250K training grant and \$200K was appropriated. The intent is to pull various materials in multiple agencies and offer (2) 32-hour programs which include instructional guides, student manuals, and forms./permits needed to operate and maintain facilities. The RFP to develop the course is nearly out. Materials will be due by 2/04. 15 facilities will get training (selected from a pool of 25 possible

communities). This “beta test” will be evaluated next fiscal year. The training will be attached to the project construction costs.

Gerry noted that AVEC, AEA and Denali Commission will be advisory to the DCED/RUBA process.

V Funding Summit Update

Ruth St. Amour

November 4-6, there will be a Funding Summit in Juneau hosted by Southeast Conference and the Central Council of the Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska. 18 projects will be presented and a training session will be offered on community planning.

Coleen noted that the Building Our Communities work group suggested the Funding Summits be renamed “Regional Leadership Summits” to avoid implying automatic funding of projects.

Ruth and Cindy also discussed plans to contact previous project presenters in order to give Juneau participants a feel for the success ratios and timeframes involved in this process. More funding Summit information is available in the DCED website: dced.state.ak.us/cbd/grt/fundingsummits.htm.

VI Building Our Communities Conference UpDate

Colleen Bickford

The Anchorage Marriott Hotel has been secured for the event. RurAL Cap is doing the administration (\$65K total budget) Denali Commission has contributed \$6,500 as a matching grant. USDA and HUD have also contributed (\$30K and \$15K. DCED and HUD are the primary agencies, but AML, AFN, RurAL Cap, and Pat Jackson from Rep. Kapsner’s office are also involved.

Recent planning sessions for the 4/04 conference have developed four tracks for participants: leadership development, planning, land use, and community development. One luncheon topic is “How can you help your legislator help you better?” Al volunteered Yuri Morgan (legislative liaison to Denali) to help line up legislators as speakers.

Next planning meeting is 10/9 1:30 at HUD. Contact gail_west@HUD.gov for more information.

VII DCED IT Status Report

Laura Walters

In the Denali Commission MOU, state and federal agencies agreed to share project information to increase efficiencies and decrease duplication. 10 of 13

agencies have been interviewed to date regarding their project management systems.

Jeff Staser's goal has been to automate RAPIDS through interfacing information systems. However, technology is not the real hurdle. The challenge is the flow of accurate "real time" project data; most agencies do not have "real time" information from engineers on individual projects. Example: Housing Authorities' data is at least 12 months old.

In addition, the real power of RAPIDS is to look ahead at future projects, for example, to see next summer's projects to collaborate on aerial photography for more than one project, arrange to share equipment on site, or get training accomplished to capture the employment locally. Many agencies do not have "future project" information systems – the DOT STIP is one of the few plans.

This year's RAPIDS is the best yet, because all agencies continue to improve. However, we are several years away from being able to truly automate the system. In the interim, the division's goal is to increase the accuracy of RAPIDS by providing more frequent updates, at least 2 or 3 times a year.

Coleen asked if there is a way to capture "special purpose" Congressional "earmark" funding. Kitty mentioned that workforce development projects are not listed, so training funds are not captured in the current system. Laura confirmed that RAPIDS is strictly construction information, not operating funds. Kitty offered to discuss how the training data might also enter the database.

Al and Gene offered to encourage the Corps of Engineers and the BIA to contribute info to RAPIDS. Wanetta suggested using a unique "code" for each project to track them over time (project name changes occur). Comprehensive community plans and business plans can be assembled at DCED's web page. DCED's web page currently inventories community plans and regional strategies.

Chris reported that AEA and VSW use RAPIDS daily.

VIII Role of Boroughs- responsibilities re planning

DAN BOCKHORST

9 of the 16 boroughs have charters as home rule governments. The other 7 are general law or second class boroughs. All are directed by law to do comprehensive planning. They can choose to delegate planning and platting to the city governments for the areas within city boundaries.

Senate Concurrent Resolution 12, sponsored by Senator Gary Wilken will be addressed by the legislature this year. It's primary function is to mandate that the

four “model borough” areas qualified to support borough government actually become boroughs and take on the associated responsibilities.

Wayne Maloney suggested creation of a media campaign to affected areas might include direct mail marketing in addition to messages from DCED in general and from Edgar in particular. Michelle suggested that the campaign be designed with input from the areas themselves, especially Delta. Op-Eds should be coordinated to precede direct mail. After mid-October, both Wayne Maloney and Sheila Kopczynski of USDA are available to assist on getting the message out.